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THE Poor Doubting CHRISTIAN Drawn to CHRIST.

Plainly shewing every poor Sinner the miserableness of his Estate he is in, without Christ. With several sweet Motives to Draw us to Christ, Also comfortable Directions how to live by Faith, and so to attain unto Grace and Salvation.

Being very useful for every poor Sinner to practice and make use of, in these sinful, wicked, and backsliding times.

Isa. 55. 1. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, drink of the waters of life; and he that hath no money, come, buy and eat freely.*

Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from before the foundation of the World, Mat. 25. 32.

By *E. C.*

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

Poor Doubting Christian

Drawn unto

CHRIST.

THe great Design that the most Wise God Created Man for, was, that he (being Obedient) might be happy to all Eternity; But Man being no sooner plac'd in that most Beautiful (and Fruitful) Garden of Eden, but (by the instigation of the Devil) he soon Rebell'd against his Creator, (in breaking the Commands) and so Fell, and became wicked and sinful in all his Posterity (which was) That the Seed of the Woman should break the Serpents Head; So that we being dead unto sin, might live in Christ.

And the great Design of Christ comming (in the Flesh) into the World, was to Draw poor Sinners unto him, that (thorough Faith) they might be Saved.

For whom did Christ come into the world and for whom did he dye when he was come? Was it for the Righteous? such needed him not: It was for the poor Sinner that judges himself, that condemns himself, and he that cannot save himself. Paul saith, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15: and *Zech.* 13. 1. There is a Fountain opened for sin, and for uncleanness; that is, for all sorts of sins, and kind of sinners: be their iniquities never so great and never so vile, there is a Fountain set open for them, come who will. There was never any saved or received to mercy, that first opposed not the mercies of God and his grace in Christ.

What Scripture ever said, that the greatness of mans sin could hinder the greatness of Gods mercy? No Scripture saith so; we see David prayed to the contrary. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, and pardon my sins, for they be great, *Psal* 25. 11 Nay, God himself doth the quite contrary, *Isai.* 43. 24. 25. Thou hast made me serve with thy sins, and wearied me with thine iniquities, yet I am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for my Names sake. When the Jews did tire God with their distempered

pered manners, and burdened him with their sinful courses, then the Lord (for his own Name sake) would not so much as remember their Iniquities against them.

Sins though they be never so heinous of themselves, yet if the soul can see them, and the heart be burdened with them, they are so far from hindering the work of faith, and from making thee uncapable of mercy, that they fit thee the rather to go to Christ. The truth is (which I pray you take notice of,) it is not properly our unworthiness, but our pride and haughtiness that hinders us from coming to Christ: for we would fain have something from our selves, and no all from him but to the distressed soul, that sees the vileness of his sins: the Lord will not cast thee away, if thou wilt come and seek him earnestly, again, and again: The Lord said to Judah, I have seen his ways, and will heal him, again, Thou hast played the Harlot with many Lovers, yet turn again to me, saith the Lord. So then, there is no time past, if a Man have but a heart to returne. There is no limitation of the riches of Gods free grace, except the sin against the Holy Ghost, therefore saith Christ,

I standing at the door and knock, *Revel.* 3. 20. Though he cry till he be hoarse, and stand till he be weary, yet he stands still: if any adulterous or deceitful wretch will open, Christ will come in, and bring in store of comfort to him, and sup with him.

Oh, all this is true, saith the poor soul, had I but a heart to mourn for my baseness. See my sins I do, but this is my misery, I cannot be burdened with them; I have a heart that cannot break & mourn for dishonoring God, and offending him so many ways, But I say.

This hurts not neither; provided that thy heart be weary of it self, because it cannot be weary of sin. The Lord sheweth mercy, because he will shew mercy: It is not because thou canst please him, but because mercy pleaseth him. When did the Lord shew mercy unto Paul? but even when Paul did cry, ess most malice against him: *Saul, Saul,* Why persecutest thou me? He persecutes Christ, and yet Christ pities him, and shews him mercy: and so the churlish Jaylor, when he was most opposite against the means of grace, the Lord even then shewed most comfortable upon him. He that (before) resisted the means of grace, was brought home by those

those means that before he resisted.

Alas, (saith the poor Sinner (I never knew what it was to have the assurance of Gods love; I never received any evidence of Gods favour; and can I (then) think that I have Faith? they that Believe have their hearts filled with Joy unspeakable and glorious: the Scripture saith as much. But I am a Stranger to this Joy; how then can I think that I have any work of Faith wrought in me?

I answer; When a poor Sinner sées his sins, the number of them, that nature of them, the vilenels of them, the cursednels of his soul, that he can take no rest; he sées no rest in the creature, nor in himself. Though he pray all day, yet he cannot get the pardon of one sin: the soul is out of any expectation of pardon, or power of mercy in any thing he hath or doth; Though all means, all helps, all Men and Angels should joyn together, yet they cannot pardon one sin of his. Now the LORD lifts up his voice, and says from Heaven, Thy sins are pardonable. O the infiniteness of Gods power! though the guilt of sin is powerful to condemn the soul; But when the infinite power of the Lord is considered, as able to over power

all his sins, this lifteth up the heart in some expectation that the Lord will shew mercy to a man; though it is a hard thing to hope, when the Soul is thus troubled.

Object. Can this heart be broke? can these sins be pardoned? can this Soul be saved?

Ans. God can pardon them. Never measure the power of God by that shallow conceit of thine. All things are possible to God, though not to men. And as it is said of *Abraham*, He hoped above hope; he looked to the Lord that was able to do what he had promised: he considered not that he had a dead body, but that he had a living God to hope on. Justice cannot be so severe to revenge thee, as mercy is gracious to do good unto thee. If thy sins be ne'r so many, Gods Justice ne'r so great; yet mercy is above all thy sins. This may support thy Soul; thy sins are pardonable. There is no more power in God to shew mercy to thee, then power in sin to destroy thee: The Lord Jesus Christ came to seek, and to save that which was lost: it was the scope of his coming.

Now saith the broken and humble sinner, Did Christ come to save sinners?

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my sins are so many and great, can they be pardoned? Yet God says, Come to me all ye that are heavy laden. I am weary and unless the Lord intended good to me, Why did he invite me, and bid me come? Surely he means to shew mercy to me.

O take heed! Question thy estate thou mayst but to cast away all hope, is very heinous in the eyes of the Lord, Cast away all carnal confidence thou must, and yet thou must hope; Let Israel hope in the Lord; for in the Lord, &c Thou goest to the deep Dungeon of thy corruption and there thou saist: these sins can never be pardoned. Is any thing too hard for the Lord? You wrong God exceedingly: you think it's a matter of humility, to count your selves so vile. Can God pardon such a wretches sin as mine: no, no, my sins are greater than can be pardoned, saith the dispairing Soul. Consider how injurious this is to God, to make the power of sin greater to condemn thee, than the power of God to save thee.

See now and consider what desperate danger Despair brings to a poor heart, and carries him beyond the reach of mercy. That's a sweet passage of Davids, Psal. 77. 7. Will the Lord cast me off for ever? I said this

this was my infirmity: What, is mercy gone for ever: then is all my comfort gone: Therefore take héed of this, it takes off the edge of all our endeavours and Gods Ordinances that might do us good.

Therefore, let the soul in this case bear upon the Almightiness of the Power of God, who said to *Abraham*, I am God All-sufficient. For if thou be perswaded of the All-sufficiency of God, that assurance cannot but stay thée from falling: and here remember that God can do more then thou canst think. He is able, and doth the good, though thou knowest it not.

Measure not the riches of Gods love, and the sweetness of his saving grace according to your own conceits: nor do you think that beeause you cannot presently receive it, therefore God will not do it, for *Isaiah* saith, Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, *Isa.* 55. 7, 8, 9. that is, All you wicked ones, and you that have lived lewdly, Return from your wicked ways and vain thoughts; and God will abundantly shew mercy.

Thou must in all things that concern thy Soul repair to the Scripture: so thou must

must consider thine own uprightness by it, and see what work is in thy soul that is able to answer the Word, and to testifie that the work of grace is there. And here be sure to take your soul at the best: do not always poze upon the worst that is in it, nor upon thy failings, nor that, that can onely accuse thee; but if thou find any thing there that may justly speak for thee, neglect not that. It is an injustice for any Court to hear one side and not the other, The Scripture is a Text of Justice, and the Lord doth not lie at catch with his Children, but takes them at the best: as *Rom.* 4. 22. it is there said of *Abraham* that he believed the promise, and it was imputed to him for righteousness Indeed, as in the 12. of Gen. he had some doubtings: but God tok him at the best: and speaks this of his faith. So Sarah is spoken of as a gracious Woman, and of a pattern for women, by calling her Husband Lord, which was a sign of reverence to her Husband, and an humble heart to the Word, and yet we read that she derided the Message of the Lord by the Angel: the Lord buries that, and onely speaks of that which was to her commendation, Gen. 12. 12. and so tok her at her best

best to: Now as the Lord dealt with these so should we with our selves: what love: is found sincere and upright in us, that should we observe as well as that which is not so: So when men shall bring in so many Indictments against themselves, and say, Oh what pride and stubbornes is in my heart! Oh how weak am I, and dull, and dead, and backwardnes to holy duties! O how careles of enioying Communion with God! How negligent in sifting and trying my own heart, in watching over my senses, and mourning in secret for my own failings! Though this were so, yet if men will see no more (and these too much) no marvel if they trouble their own house, or if Sathan by their own words Iudge them. To such a one therefore I say, All that thou sayest may be true; but art thou not troubled with these failings: and are they not the greatest grief that thy soul hath? Yes saith the poor soul, I confess my heart is vexed, and my soul grieved for them; and I could be content to be any thing that I could be so.

Now labor to have thy Conscience settled and stablish'd in the truth, which now thou hast gotten to bear witnes of the

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work of grace in thee. For if there be any want of the assurance of Gods love, For if our Conscience condemn us not, then we have boldness towards God. We must stop the mouth of Conscience; that is, be convinced and agree, that it is a sin to say, God hath not wrought this work of grace in the heart, when 'tis so clear he hath. For though sense and feeling be (as it sometimes will be) gone, yet Conscience remembers the day and year, when the sinner had a clear evidence of Gods love, and therefore saith, Lord thou knowest it, and thou didst say out of the Word at such a time, that the heart of this poor soul was upright and sincere before thee.

You must therefore wait upon God, and the Spirit of God in the use of the means for this matter, by believing rightly to your assurance: For so the Text saith, To you it is given to believe; it must be given therefore: and Faith is the free gift of God. It is God then that must doit; who yet will not do it without us, being reasonable men and women in the power of willing. Again, the Lord affords us means; yet not to use them, and give him the slip. And true it is a good saying, let the Lord do what he will, and let us do

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what we should. We must not think when wee have the means, that we can get Faith presently: for, as Paul saith, The same power that raised up Jesus from the dead, must make us able to believe, *Eph.* 1.20. or else all the Angels in Heaven, and all the Ministers on Earth, and all help that Men and Means can give us, will do us no good. Now the Means are of divers kinds: as, Hearing, and Prayer, and Sacraments, which are ỳ Conduits from which God communicats Faith.

Now Faith brings the Promises home to thee, and thou seest the sufficiency of it, then all thou hast to do is this, in the stream of ỳ Promise, be carried home to Christ. The Prodigal Luke 15. is said to be like a lost Sheep. Mark this, for it concerns you. The poor Sheep is wandring up and down; now in the mouth of the Lyon, and then in the Bryers, and sometimes in the Pit: The Text saith, He leaveth ninty nine, to seek that. That is, in comparison of what care he expresseth to the Lost Sheep; Ye leaveth a man regenerats not carel fly, but he will not expresse so great love, as to a poor lost man: And though thou canst not find ỳ way to heaven, yet he will find it thee; lye thou upon

on the shoulders of Christ. When thou findst thy heart feble and weak, and thy self unable to beleive, then the Lord Jesus Christ brings the Spirit of Grace, & that comes to seek, and Jesus Christ layes that soul of thine upon his Soulders (that is upon ỳ riehnels & frænses of his Grace) Therefore let thy heart be transported by the Power of that Grace, & by the vertue of that Mercy that God hath made known to thee, for thy everlasting good.

Therefore rest thy self upon this Promise, and say; Lord, in the vertue of that Grace, and in the power of that Spirit, carry me, and in the riches of that mercy of thine. Lord, convey the heart of this poor Sinner, and make me happy with thy self for ever. Remember what Christ saith, *Matth.* 25.34. Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prpared for you. Then no more tears, no more trouble, no more sorrow, no more sin; the day will come when ye shall have happiness & joy, beyond all that the tougne of man can express, or the heart conceive.

Though we are buffetted with many temptations, and waried with a world of corruptions, yet we shall be saved, saith Faith.

Remember

Remember what I speak now; and labour to fasten this truth upon thy heart; that there is not only present good in thy self, but in another, and reserved by another for thy comfort, and be thou content it should be so, not only to look what thou hast; but consider that the greatest part of thy glory, is in the glory of a Christ; and the greatest part of thy wisdom, is in the wisdom of a Christ, and the greatest part of thy liberty, in the liberty of a Christ; and thy riches, in the riches of a Christ: And know, what ever is in Christ, thou hast it all as thine; *John* 3.12. Behold what love the Father hath shewn to us, that we are now the Sons of God! I tell you Brethren, this is a marvelous privilege, and if you had no more but this, you had a childs portion; but it appears not what we shall have, we have but a glimps now; what think you will the harvest be? Now we have but the first of it, what shall then the full cups be, when we shall see Christ as he is, Thus did Moses improve his estate, *Heb.* 11.26. He bore all afflictions comfortably; yea, He esteemed the rebukes of Christ greater riches then the treasures of *Egypt*; Why? because he had an eye to the Recompence, of Reward.

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What Moses did, do thou: Though thou hast many corruptions; and many disgraces cast upon thee, though thou hast little strength, and art at a great loss in point of comfort, yet there is enough in Heaven, enough in Christ, both of riches and comfort: Let thy soul then be careful to make all these present with thee for thine own good.

When the Husband man hath sown his ground, and his fruit is ripe, and he hath reaped it, then he must gather in his Corn, that he may live upon it. So let us gather in the Promises when we see the best advantage; now let us take the gain and live by it, and that comfortably too, in the proof of Gods goodness therein. For this end I shall give you some directions, how to live in, and by faith.

First, Thou seest what God is in the Promise; and thou expectest no more than God there. Then look upon that particular good in the Promise, which thou standest in need of; eye that good in Christ, and then set Gods power and Faithfulness a work to bring that good, and his Wisdom to continue it. That which thou seest and needst in the Promise, that the Power and Wisdom of God may

communicate to thy soul. This is the meaning of that place, *Psal.* 37. 5. Commit thy ways unto the Lord; trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass. Roll thy self, and lay all thy occasions upon the Lord: Therefore the Apostle saith, 1 *Pet.* 5. Hurl your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you. It is Gods proper office and work: he careth for thy soul, therefore lay it wholly upon him, and put over all thy care into his hands: and set his power and faithfulness a work. I speak not this, that we should take no care at all, but I say, hang all the weight and burden upon the Lord.

Secondly, By Faith go to the promise again for help and power to wait on God in that way, and to look towards God in the use of those means, that he hath appointed for the attaining of that good, which his power will work for thee: God will certainly work it: and so thou must meet God in the course of his providence, in the improvement of the means he hath appointed for thy good: Observe thou this providence, and do thou what God requires: for otherwise we live not by Faith, but tempt God, and throw away the Promises and all, & deprive our selves of that good which God would bestow:

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we not walking in that way which he hath appointed. *Luke* 24. 46. When our Saviour was to go to Heaven, he said, Behold I send the promise of my Father among you: but tarry you in the City of *Jerusalem*, until you be indued with power from above. Christ would indue them with the Spirit; but they must tarry at Jerusalem, and wait for it: So I say. Wouldst thou have Grace and the Spirit from above, and the wealth of the world, then walk in that way God hath appointed: stay at Jerusalem, meet God in his providence, and then thou shalt receive from his power and faithfulness what thou needest: thou wouldest have God bless thee in thine Estate, and yet thou wouldst be idle and careless; but this will not do the deed: God would give thee a blessing, but thou art not prepared to take it: This is the excellency of the Promises of God; as they require conditions, before they bestow mercies; so they make us able to be partakers of the conditions: As for example, Ezek. 36. the Lord in the former part of the Chapter, promises to give them many things; but how? It must be by prayer, and humbling themselves before him: he will give thee a family-blessing

by prayer in it; and a blessing is private, by prayer in private; and strength against sin, and power against corruption: But I will be sought unto for all these saith the Lord: Blessed is the man that walketh in his integrity, and his children after him. Therefore walk thou in the integrity of thine heart, that's the condition of a Christian in general. This the Lord requires: And the Lord that requireth the conditions, will help us to perform the conditions: and the same Lord saith, I will be intreated and sought too for all these. And *Psal.* 10. 17. He prepareth their hearts to pray: Go thou therefore to God to help thee to pray, that he may bestow his blessing upon thee, which he hath promised, *Eze.* 26, 27. He will first give them a new heart, then teach them to walk in his wayes. So if thou wilt walk in his ways, thou shalt have his blessings; therefore go thou (by Faith) to God for Strength and Grace, and then expect a Blessing from him.

Thirdly. We must believe that God will do it; so shall we receive in the ways of his providence, whatever he hath promised to give. This is the work of faith. Hannah wept sore, and prayed to the Lord,

and

and went away, & was no more sorrowful 1 Sam. 1. 18. and she said, Lord, I believe that I shall either have a child, or that which is as good or better: now Hannah's business was done. But imagin the Lord delayes, and does not suddenly accomplish what he intends, and thou hast used means to receive, he gives not, nor sends no succour according to thy desire.

Fourthly, Then Faith is to stay till it come; as thou believest, so it will be: We prevent Gods kindness, when we go away before he be willing to bestow it on us. But Faith will not do so; he that believes does not make hast away, but stays, and resolves that it will come. The vision is for an appointed time, Therefore wait for it. Perhaps thou art troubled with thy sins, and hast laboured by Faith to subdue them, and looks for deliverance, and yet it comes not: therefore stay till God sees it fit, and it will come, Psal. 123. 2. As the eyes of a servant look to the hands of his master, and the eyes of a maiden to her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until he have mercy upon us. It is not when I will, or according to my mind, but when the Lord pleases.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Yet perhaps the Lord ſéems ſometimes not only to delay his poor ſervants, and to withhold his favour; but he ſéems to frown, and ſay, he will not hear; and ſéems to be angry with the prayers of his ſervants, and as if he would not ſuccour or ſupply them. Thus he dealt with Jacob, *Gen.* 32. 26. there the Lord ſayes, Let me go, I care not what becomes of thée: But Jacob lays hold upon him, and would not let him go. So the laſt work of Faith is this: In a holy humility labour to contend with God, and by ſtrong hand overcome the Lord; for the Lord loves to be overcome thus; as it were, catch the Lord Jeſus & ſtrive with him; leave him not till thou haſt theſe comforts he hath promiſed, and thou haſt begged.

This is the glorious victory and triumph of Faith, that gives thée the day to, and yeilds himſelf conquered: As it was with Jacob, when God ſaw he could not prevail, verſe 28. Thy name ſhall no more be called *Jacob*, but *Iſrael*, becauſe thou haſt prevailed with God. God is ready to give what he hath promiſed: but he will have us try the maſtery with him; we by faith in God, overcome God: as James 2.

13.

13. Mercy triumphs over Justice: You know what the Lord did to the woman of Canaan, when she had striven with Christ a great while, and would take no denial: at last he saith, O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee as thou wilt. Take what thou wilt, if thou wilt have life for thy child, and peace for thine own conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost, take it; for it is all thine. He, as it were, turns her loose to all his treasury. If she had gone away at the first or second denial, she had found no help: but because she held out, she had her hearts desire. God would have us wrestle with his Mercy, that he may be overcome in mercy and goodness.

I might here have taken some of the most desperate cases that could be, that you might have seen what Faith would have done in midst of the want of all Means, and in the greatest extremity that would have befalln a poor Sinner; but I pass them all over. Now I beseech you, consider what hath been said: lay these things up by you; they will be an everlasting Treasury for you. Many people live poorly, and make a poor shift to go to heaven: but I would have a Christian to learn to live so, and use the means; that they

they may get the sap and sweet of the Promises, and so go singing, rejoycing, and triumphing up to Heaven.

To conclude, Thus we see the hinderances removed, and the means propounded: and that we may be moved, and perswaded (for our souls sake; for Jesus Christs sake) to seek after this blessed Grace of Faith in Christ, let us further consider thus much, that if we once get this Grace, we get all other Graces with it; further, would you have the glory of God in sight, and be more heavenly minded: then get it by the eye of Faith: look up to it in the face of Jesus Christ, for there and there's only this vision of the Glory of God to be seen, to your everlasting Peace, and endless Comfort.

Courteous People, I desire you (for Jesus Christ's sake) to buy this Book, and read it seriously, and meditate upon it; hoping it will prove an everlasting Treasury, for your Souls good.

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